

Chief, Economic Research Area

27 December 1957

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Ideas for improving U.S. posture

1. Mr. Khrushchev has proposed replacing weapons competition with peaceful competition on the grounds that "the victory of social systems will be achieved . . . according to which system insures more material and spiritual welfare for man." We should explicitly and in a loud voice accept this challenge, (at the same time keeping our powder dry), for it puts US-Soviet competition on grounds which could not be better for us had we selected them ourselves. These are the best grounds for us because the great successes of our system in these areas can easily be demonstrated to the Bloc and the rest of the world is groping for a means which will do these two things. We should then proceed to demonstrate tangibly possibly picking India as a place in which to do it, that the spiritual and material welfare of the people can be advanced through American methods without the horrible human costs of the Russian or Chinese methods.

2. We should take positive and decisive action in the major areas which are the current preoccupation of most of the World's peoples. These preoccupations include the search for peace, the need for added supplies of food, capital and energy in a number of countries, the promotion of higher standards of health in large parts of Africa and Asia, and the encouragement of trade with the, in order that our bounty may not be at the cost of self-respect. The first step should be to show our desire for peace by offering, for example, to cease all nuclear weapon tests for a fixed period, unilaterally if necessary; economic programs designed to deal with the other problems should then follow.

3. It is said that one-half or more of the world's people go to bed at night hungry. Offer then, to establish a research organization possibly under U.N. auspices, endowed to do research on artificial photosynthesis, so that a more efficient way of producing food can be discovered. In the meantime, give our surplus food away to those who need it, for in a world where there is hunger, no one is less popular than the rich man who throws away bread.

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